In Topic A, students use all four operations to solve one- and two-step word problems within various contexts that were studied throughout the year. The problems are challenging and require students to carefully consider solution paths as they “make sense of problems and persevere in solving them” (MP.1).

Guided practice with strategies for problem solving is built into Lessons 1 and 2. These lessons emphasize the use of modeling through the Read-Draw-Write (RDW) process and revisit models such as tape diagrams and number bonds. Students flexibly use a letter to represent the unknown as they solve. This practice readies them for problem solving with perimeter and area in Topics C and E.

In Lesson 3, students’ level of independence within the lesson increases. They work together or on their own to develop solution paths and then share strategies and solutions. Students think critically about their own work and that of others through peer review and critique. They discuss the clarity, practicality, and efficiency of different models and strategies, refining their own understandings and approaches. Student presentations of work and protocols for critiquing are structures that provide a platform for this dialogue.
A Teaching Sequence Toward Mastery of Solving Word Problems

Objective 1: Solve word problems in varied contexts using a letter to represent the unknown.
   (Lessons 1–2)

Objective 2: Share and critique peer solution strategies to varied word problems.
   (Lesson 3)